

UN expert group agrees draft final report on autonomous weapons; treaty question deferred

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International organizations – Meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems

Disarmament and non-proliferation

Communiqué

On : September 10th 2026

France welcomes a significant step towards an international framework for autonomous weapons. After three years of discussions, the 128 States party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) agreed on a draft final report by the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS).

This is a concrete step towards regulating LAWS, which shows that, despite current international tensions, multilateral dialogue can still allow us to reach common positions on arms control. France fully contributed to this.

The report adopted lays the foundations for a future international framework. Among other things, it allows us more effectively to define the systems concerned, set out common principles and provide for clear prohibitions for certain systems, along with measures relating to control, risk reduction and the allocation of responsibilities.

The text clarifies, inter alia, the notions of "human control and judgment" and reaffirms, in accordance with France's steadfast positions, that human beings "exercise control" over weapons systems with autonomous functions. In other words, technological progress must not lead to the most serious decisions being delegated entirely to a machine, particularly those involving the use of force.

The next CCW review conference, to be held in Geneva in November 2026, will have to decide on the next steps to be taken in response to the report. France would like it to adopt a new negotiating mandate for the Group of Experts, based on all the elements agreed last week. The goal is clear: to begin discussions for establishing a future international instrument, which bans completely autonomous weapons systems and regulates systems with autonomous functions.

As we witness the rapid development of autonomy in weapons systems, which poses [serious] questions in particular as regards respect for international humanitarian law, France reaffirms its determination to work constructively to find a mandate that can build consensus and move the international community towards common, responsible and balanced rules for the regulation of LAWS.

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